

## **MINUTES OF MEETING**

### **Parks, Open Space and Trails Advisory Board – December 11, 2019 Ada County Parks and Waterways Administration building**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Karen Danley, Hilarie Engle, Chris Miller, Chuck Vertrees, Kari Kostka, Emily Reaves, Scott Frey

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**STAFF PRESENT:** Mike Edwards, Candy Hahlbeck, Scott Koberg

**OTHER:** Brent Moore; Development Services, Commissioner Rick Visser, Brenda Mittleider; equestrian, Susan Osterburg; equestrian.

#### **INTRODUCTION:**

K. Kostka called the meeting to order at 12:08 p.m. No conflicts of interest were declared by Advisory Board members.

K. Danley moved to approve the October 23rd minutes with changes. C. Vertrees seconded. Motion passed.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **SUBCOMITTEE REPORTS:**

C. Miller supplied an update from the Bike Park subcommittee. He and K. Kostka met with Tesh Coles who is the founder of the Dirt Dolls, a women mountain biking organization. There is a calendar set early in the year for dates and location of rides. This group has up to 65 members that show up for rides at a time. There are never more than 10 members in a group ride. The groups are broken up by ability level. Tesh is an advanced mountain bike rider who has some useful and practical ideas from a downhill mountain bike rider perspective. Her overall opinion is that the Bike Park offers a little bit of something for everyone. She feels it is missing a good progression across the user groups (beginner, intermediate and experienced riders). Her preference would be to have 2, 4 and 6 foot drops so there is a progression as one moves up in experience. In addition, she feels that some of the features in the terrain park are not useful for beginner riders. K. Kostka added that the Dirt Dolls don't use the Bike Park for any of their training because it's not logically laid out and they worry about the liability. Parking is another issue that Tesh brought up. There aren't many trailheads in the valley that offer the amount of parking that the Bike Park does. Tesh was educated on the Bike Park land ownership and which entity owns and maintains which area. Even with this knowledge, she has run into issues understanding what the rules are and where they might change. A specific example is that Tesh came across an altercation between mountain bikers she knew and a couple walking their dog off leash. They were arguing about whether that area was on or off leash. Tesh didn't see the initial incident happen, so she didn't know where everyone was when the altercation began. They were at the top of the hill where the Flow Trail starts. Tesh was unsure if the park is consistently on or off leash in all areas and she wasn't sure if it was signed at every juncture where ownership ends and another begins. Tesh's suggestion was that everything should be consistent and signed at every trail juncture of ownership change. Tesh was unsure of who to contact with questions. C. Miller suggested that there be a central person or contact email to make it easier for users to communicate any problems or issues. Tesh isn't a fan of E-Bikes, but she does recognize the value of them.

Tesh has concerns about equestrians in the Bike Park. Because trails like the Flow Trail are fast and downhill only, it isn't a place for equestrians as bikes aren't able to yield to them to avoid a collision. Tesh is of the opinion that they shouldn't be allowed in the park at all to avoid user conflict. This brings up a point that K. Danley has mentioned in the past; rerouting equestrians and pedestrians around the Bike Park. C. Miller went on to say that he knew that there were issues with the land ownership, but couldn't recall exactly what those issues were. He inquired what would be involved in

making a trail like this happen. S. Koberg clarified that there are 4 landowners in this area. This includes Eagle, Ada County, BLM and Idaho State Veterans Cemetery. In terms of creating a new trail on the opposite side of the landfill fence, there are steps on Ada County's side as well as if there is an assumed increase of use on the trailhead on Veterans property. This has been a concern for the Veterans Cemetery in the past as this is their designated trailhead.

K. Danley added that it's a real safety issue to force equestrian users to gather at the Bike Park, its incumbent upon us to give them a safe option to circumvent it. To put horses and bikes together causes high risk factors. C. Miller added that one of the outcomes of K. Danley's suggestion is that equestrians not being allowed at the Bike Park. K. Danley responded that if there's an option for equestrians to go around, that is would be a feasible outcome. K. Danley mentioned that she is a member of the Northwest Neighborhood Association. They have received a grant for \$50,000 for a survey and neighborhood plan. She is in charge of connectivity. A big goal of the NWNNA is to have more trails.

M. Edwards added that this was the type of information he was looking for.

E. Reaves added that it would be ideal to have the rules of the Bike Park be consistent across all entities. M. Edwards added that we have tried to be consistent, specifically on the dog on/off leash issue. We have has several meeting with the City of Eagle and there was a discussion about having a meeting with one of Eagle's enforcement officers. This never happened and Eagle went ahead with changing the rules on their side. Eagle's portion of the Bike Park is on leash only. Ada County's portion is controlled off leash. Many Ridge to Rivers trails are controlled off leash.

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

S. Koberg expressed his appreciation for all the time Board members have put into the committee. S. Koberg updated the Board on the Echanove Ranch. In October, letters were sent to the Parks Board and Board of County Commissioners from the HOA President and an Echanove Ranch property owner. These letters have since been responded to. The letters indicated that our department has been directed to complete the design and construction of the non-motorized multiuse public recreation trail using our standards and specifications to the best of our ability. Echanove property owners are encouraged to work with Ada County for this project.

The Barber Park RFQ coordination meeting for the pathways project happened on December 9<sup>th</sup>. This process involves 4 departments within Ada County and the PA's Office. We hope to have a landscape architect under contract for the design elements by the end of February. If we can't get everything done from a design and construction standpoint, S. Koberg intends to ask the Board to roll over funding to the next fiscal year.

There is a Sunroc coordination meeting this afternoon with Sunroc and the County engineer. This is in regards to some of the activities Sunroc will be implementing for the inlet/outlet structure. There will also be some Greenbelt closures associated with this. This will be in the area around the bridge on the Garden City side. He will know more about the duration of the Greenbelt closure after this meeting. K. Kostka inquired if this section has been paved or if that was the JPD section. S. Koberg responded that JPD (aka Sunroc) was the same section that was damaged during the flood fight. K. Danley asked for clarification on what JPD has to do with Sunroc. S. Koberg responded that this particular section of pathway came to the County in the form of 3 easements and 2 license agreements on privately owned property. It was formerly known as the Foundation for Ada Canyon Trail System (FACTS). The FACTS organization had requested that the County adopt the name Judy Peavy-Derr given her contribution to various Greenbelt projects during her tenure as County Commissioner but also as a FACTS member and President of this board. This name was accepted by the Board of County Commissioners. K. Danley inquired as to the timeline for completion. S. Koberg commented that they could possibly finish in February but because they didn't start on time he is unsure of what the Greenbelt closure entails.

Expo Idaho Greenbelt segment update. We did get approval from the Board of County Commissioners to move forward with spending money to fix this pathway. S. Koberg plans to bring some other recommendations to the Board for consideration in January. To date, we only have commitment for \$70-80,000 to saw cut and patch. The existing fence along the pathway causes claustrophobia and

casts a shadow not allowing snow and ice to melt off the path. This fence is necessary, but with Board of County Commissioner approval, we would like to push it back 10 feet.

The Board passed a resolution forming the Expo Idaho Advisory Committee. S. Koberg intends to make this Board aware of the Expo Idaho Greenbelt and also the pathway parallel to Glenwood that connects to the Marigold parking and goes all the way to the Glenwood and Chinden intersection.

R. Visser commented that he is happy that S. Koberg is on the committee.

#### **OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS COORDINATOR REPORT:**

M. Edwards provided an update on his activities. He showed a PowerPoint as he talked. He went over projects that were completed in 2019 at Oregon Trail. These include resurface and striped parking lot, installed map kiosks, completed survey and legal descriptions for Simplot license agreement, named all trails, mapped and reroute the eroded trail and is in discussions with BLM to complete work, installed dog waste bag dispensers, and worked with ITD on design and installation of new highway sign. An old hay wagon was purchased. The wheels will be used to decorate the entrance to the park along with some columnar basalt rock.

M. Edwards showed the finished project of a trail he worked on to combat trail cupping at the Bike Park.

M. Edwards talked about all the weeds that were cleaned up at Hubbard.

Ongoing work includes working with National Park Service on signage, developing a master plan for Oregon Trail Recreation Area, working on approval of new license agreement with Simplot for Oregon Trails, updating Oregon Trail kiosk information, installing sign posts and trail signage, moving layback kicks, working with Echanove Ranch and discussing options for trail width. K. Danley inquired about the width of the trail. M. Edwards responded that he suggested 10 feet. E. Reaves inquired if there was a timeline for making the all-weather trail with BLM at the Oregon Trail. M. Edwards responded that he wants to meet with the BLM and create an MOU for this property. This will need to include an environmental assessment of the all-weather trail that goes up the hill for replacement/re-route. There is also some land they own with eroded roads. He would like to establish a loop trail in this area along with a parking lot on that end. This is at least 1-2 years out. S. Koberg added that there are some budget components to this as well.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS:**

M. Edwards added that the National Park Service is being sued along with a suit regarding the US Forest Service for allowing E-Bikes on any trail that a bicycle would be allowed on. He passed out some information on this. K. Kostka commented that the lawsuit isn't just dealing with opposition to E-Bikes, but the lack of procedure around it including no public comment or not having the authority to issue such a memorandum. M. Edwards added that under NEPA there is a certain public process that they have to follow and they didn't follow this process.

K. Kostka let everyone know that we would have an equestrian presenter in January and Eric Grace from the Land Trust of the Treasure Valley will present in March.

#### ***ADJOURNMENT***

**K. Kostka adjourned the meeting at 1:03p.m.**